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Essex, CT 06426

March 5, 2019

Energy and Technology Committee
201 Capital Ave
Hartford, CT 06106

Comments on Proposed H.B. 7251 & 7115

Members of the Energy and Technology Committee,

Independence Solar is a turnkey developer, installer, and owner of commercial solar projects headquartered in Essex, CT. As a clean energy small business owner in our state I would love the opportunity to expand our company and grow our workforce in CT. These are high paying, high skills, career path jobs. However, we have not been able to do that over the past several years for one primary reason: lack of supportive and long duration public policy. The cost of solar energy in CT has dropped dramatically over the past 5-10 years, but during that time the state's clean energy policy directives have actually gone backwards. The state is losing out on a tremendous opportunity to create jobs, save money for homeowners and businesses, and lead the transformation into a cleaner, lower cost, and more modern 21st century energy system.

Independence Solar appreciates this opportunity to submit comments on the following bills:

H.B. 7251

- Support extending the commercial ZREC program to provide more time to craft a successor program.
- Recommend adding both a Yr 9 and Yr 10, as it will take more time to navigate the transition and policy gaps lead to i) job losses and ii) increased costs for consumers.
- Restore ZREC funding to original \$8M/year level (was cut down to \$4M/yr for Yrs 6-8). Commercial solar has been shrinking since those cuts were implemented in Yr 6, at a time when we should be accelerating.
- Clarify that 64% ZREC price cap reduction is off of original price cap. There has already been a 64% reduction implemented by PURA, a further 64% would render the program unfeasible.

H.B. 7115

- Virtual net metering is a great way for farms, towns, and the state to take advantage of clean energy to reduce their electrical costs.
- The original \$10M allocation was quickly oversubscribed, locking out many towns and farms. The proposed \$20M would do little to alleviate the existing backlog for more towns and farms.
- Recommend removing the virtual net metering caps all together.

Independence Solar would like to thank the Committee for its consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

James Schwartz

James Schwartz
Co-Owner
Independence Solar, LLC